Animal ACADEMY

はこぶね白書

HAKOBUNE HAKUSHO

6

MOYAMU FUJINO

[6]

HAKOBUNE 箱舟
はこぶね
HAKOSHU

Cartoon by

MOYAMU FUJINO

藤野もやむ

Animal Academy: Hakobune Hakusho Volume 7
Created by Moyamu Fujino

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Volume 6

by

MOYAMU FUJINO

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Report.25

The Story of Teruo Suzuhara and Miiko

I ache all over.
...and Miiko never woke up.
I wound up falling asleep right there...
OK!
I forgot ...
...to eat breakfast.
GROWL
start the day off right!
Don't think ...
...so much.
I've gotta smile!
Snap out of it!
Smile!

Good...
...moooor-ning...!

Sa--
Morning.
You're here early.

You didn't have breakfast?
.....
...eaten some-thing.
Oops. I should've ...
Pitter
Wh-where is every-body?
They'll be here soon.
Oh. Right...
I spaced out, so...
Well, I just...
Stay put.
I'll get you some-thing.
Sasuke-kun?
?
Later

I'm not as hungry as I look, honest!
N-n-no! It's all good!
Yeah.
Huh?
What?! You're getting food?!
But...
It's fine!
I'll be back in a sec.
Running around will just make you hungrier.
No, it isn't.
But...
It's been a lot longer since Miiko ate anything...
I can't say no when...
...he's being so nice.
.....

Hey!
The boys!
They startled me.
G-good morning.
Huh?
Hey, are you two really going out?
Oh, right ...
Gasp!
Is Sasuke around?
He's never around!
Wait. Could he be...?
It's always like this, see?
Journalism Club

Miiko's gone... Why now?
...at a time like this?
Why...
Er... Um...
Oh.
There're yumori.
Oh, c'mon. We're in the same class!
Are you guys really that clueless?

Fukuta-san would never like me that way.
Oh, you mean it's not true?
Look, you can't just ask people stuff like that.
Oh, yeah! Fukuta!
Where's Suzuhara?

.....
ぱちんっ
SMACK
What am I doing...?
Get it together! C'mon, smile!
I have to smile!
Hey!
Fukuta-san!
?

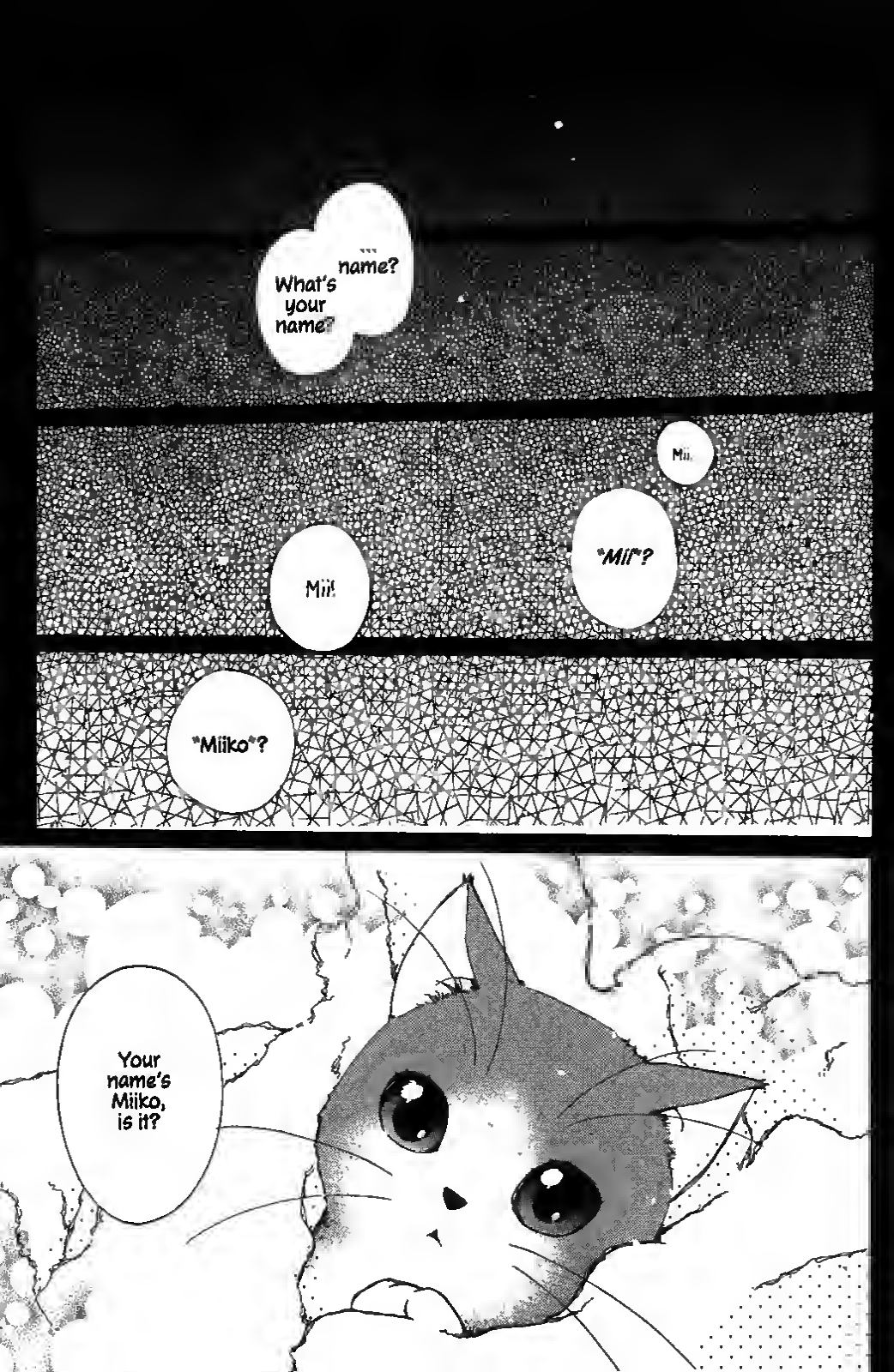
Hi, Fukuta-san!
You're early today.
Good--
Morning!
Morning.
But what good will that do?!
I hate this! I don't want to be so pathetic...!
Did i sound normal? Was I shaking?

Everything around me is spinning and spinning.
My head hurts.
I feel sick.
Huff
Huff
.....
.....
It hurts ...
The spinning just won't stop.

"Do you like Sasuke-kun?"
.....
...I don't know.
All I know is...
...it hurts.
I know I don't like this.
"We're kind of the same, huh?"
.....
Miiko...

How would you feel, Miiko?
We'd never see each other again!
I couldn't stand it if you stayed a cat forever.
How would you feel?
Come on...
Please...
...won't you answer me?

I'm tired.
I'm so hungry.
Some-body ...
Mii!
Mii!
Mii!
Mew!


What's your name?
"..." name?
Mii.
"Mii"?
Mii!
"Miiko"?
Your name's Miiko, is it?

Well, I'm Teruo Suzuhara.
It's good to meet you, Miiko!

This is the first time I've touched a living being that wasn't a human.
I heard you crying in the garden. You might as well have been a little mewing clump of mud.
Was the water too warm when i bathed you?
You're the cutest thing.
They say cats are sensitive to temperature, after all.
So cute!
Adorable ...

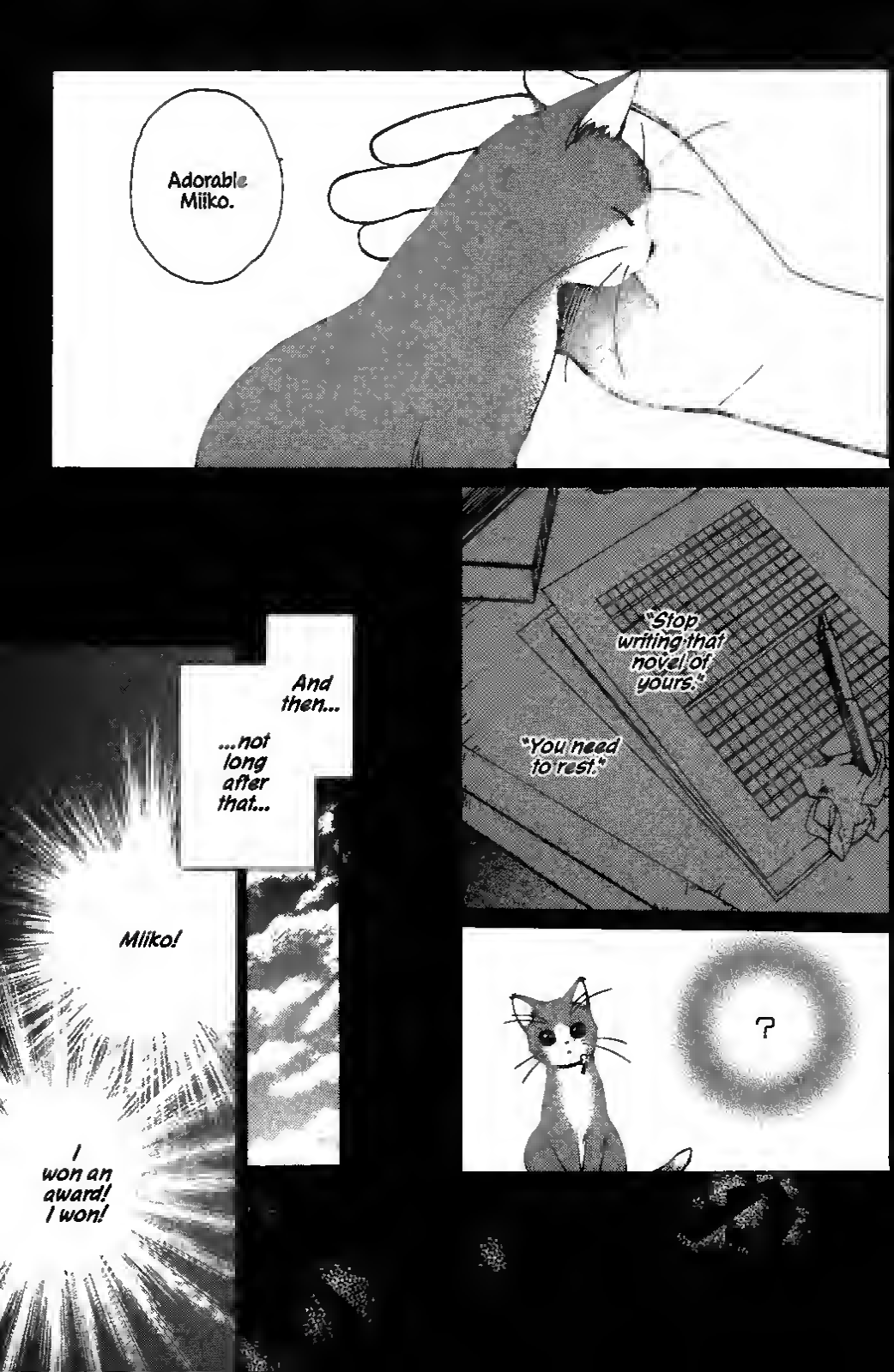
I'm Miiko--
a cat.

Trash
Miiko ...
Your paws are covered in ink.
Mii!
I love Teruo.
Mroooo...

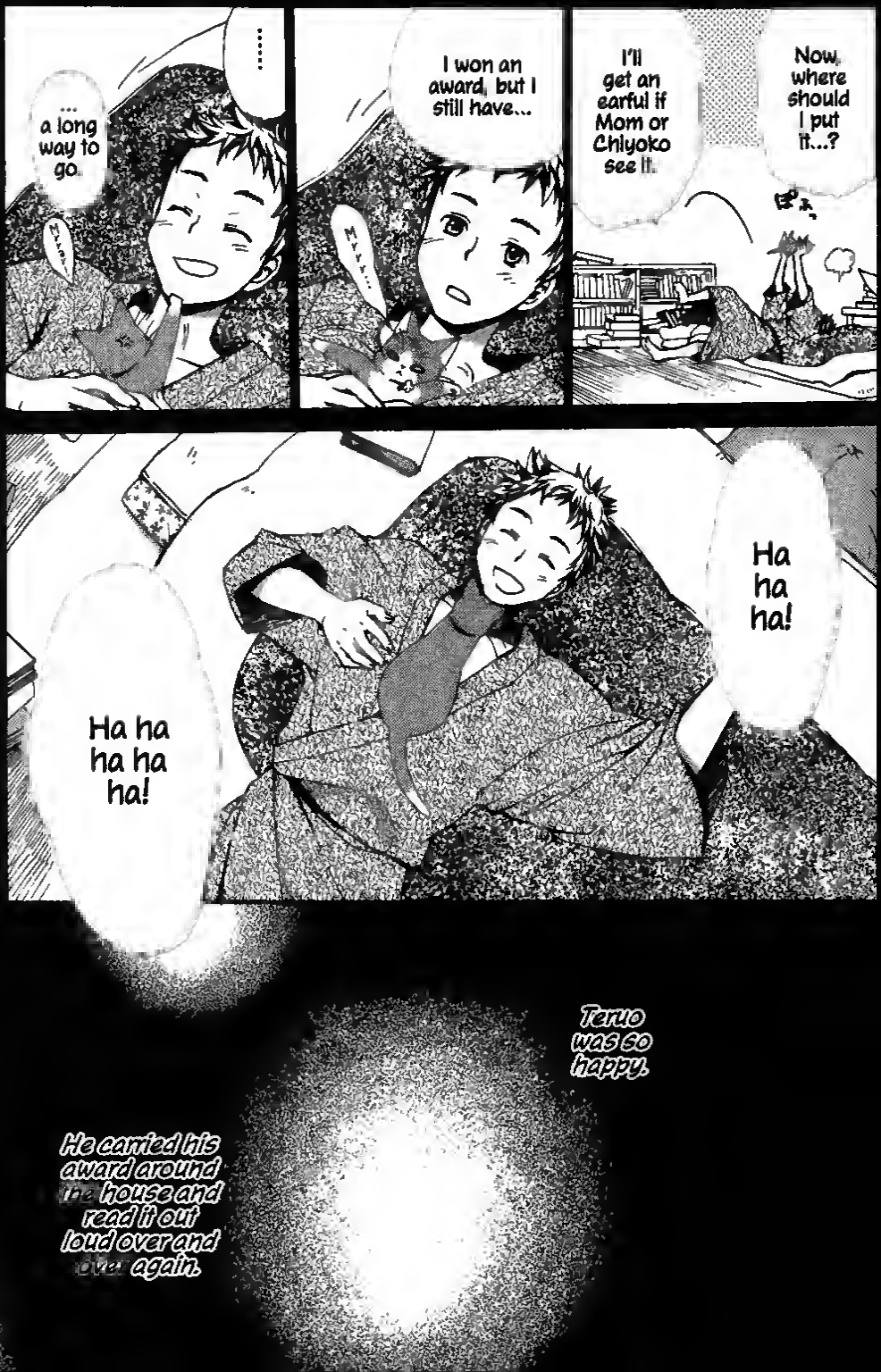
Morning, noon and night, we're together.
Teruo and I eat together every day and sleep together every night.
This is all I know, and I don't care about anything else.
Uh huh! That's what Teruo says about me too.
Miiko and Teruo...
...are the only people in the world.
That's how it was supposed to be.
Eeek! Teruo!

はす
びゃっ
びゃ
A stray cat got in!
That's Miiko! She's my cat
She's an indoor cat. It's fine.
Listen, Nii-san! Stay in bed!
I'll do my best.
You don't need to keep cleaning.
And please stopping getting sick so much
Are you eating enough? Taking your medicine?
Yeah. Don't worry.

Yeah, I know.
I know. Really.
You need to rest.
Stop writing that novel of yours.
Come on...
There was someone...
...who sometimes came to our home.
She'd stay for a while...
...and then disappear again.
Good girl!
Let's get some sleep.
Miiko, come here

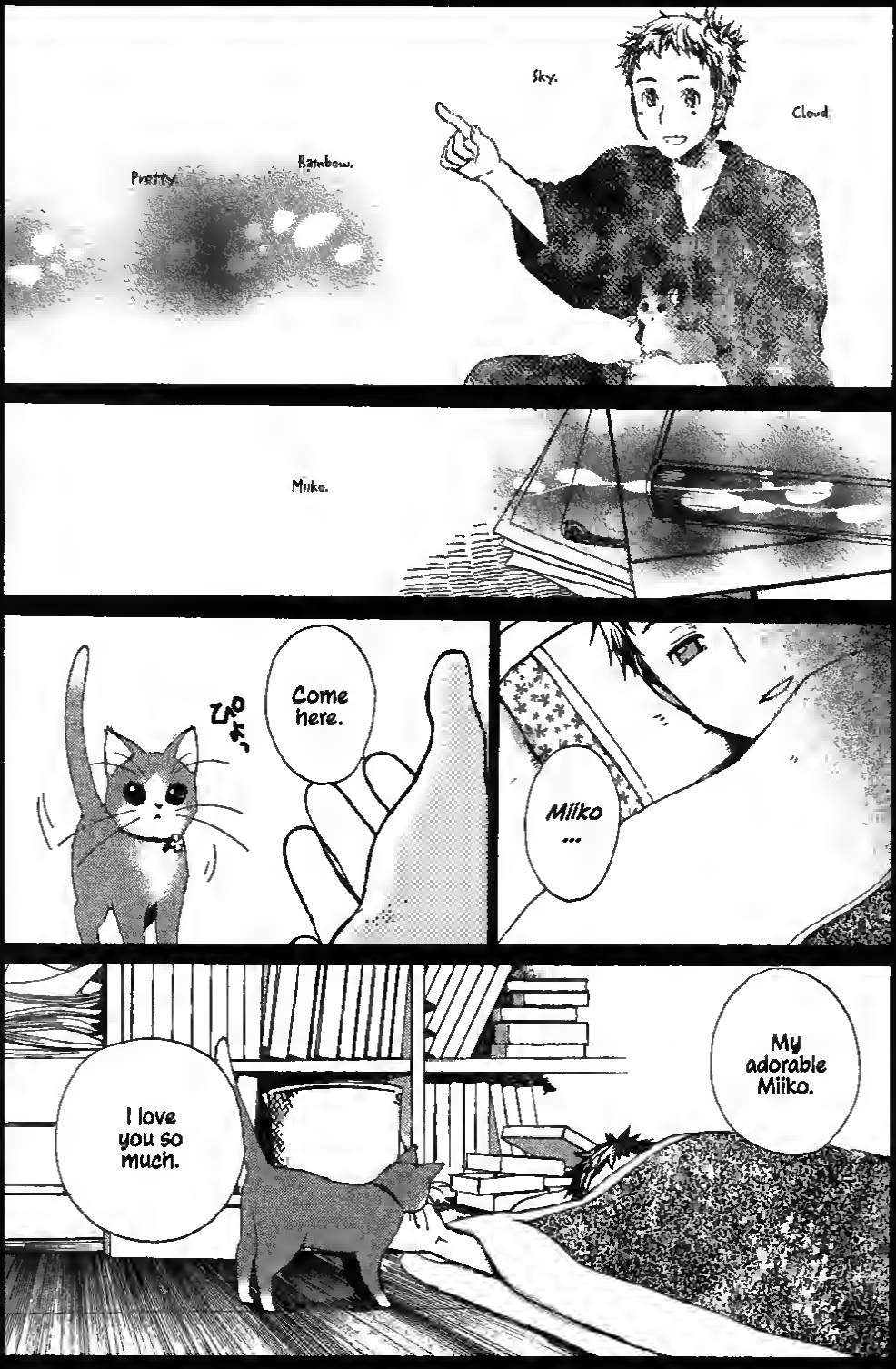

Adorable Miiko.
"Stop writing that novel of yours."
"You need to rest."
?
And then...
...not long after that...
Miiko!
I won an award! I won!

Isn't it amazing?!
Look at this!
My dream's finally come true!
This is so great! I'm so happy...!
It's the first time this has happened!
Look!
It's the real thing!
It's a small award, but it's from Kanda! An actual publisher!
?
I'm gonna make a living as a writer! I'll get healthy, and our lives will get even better!

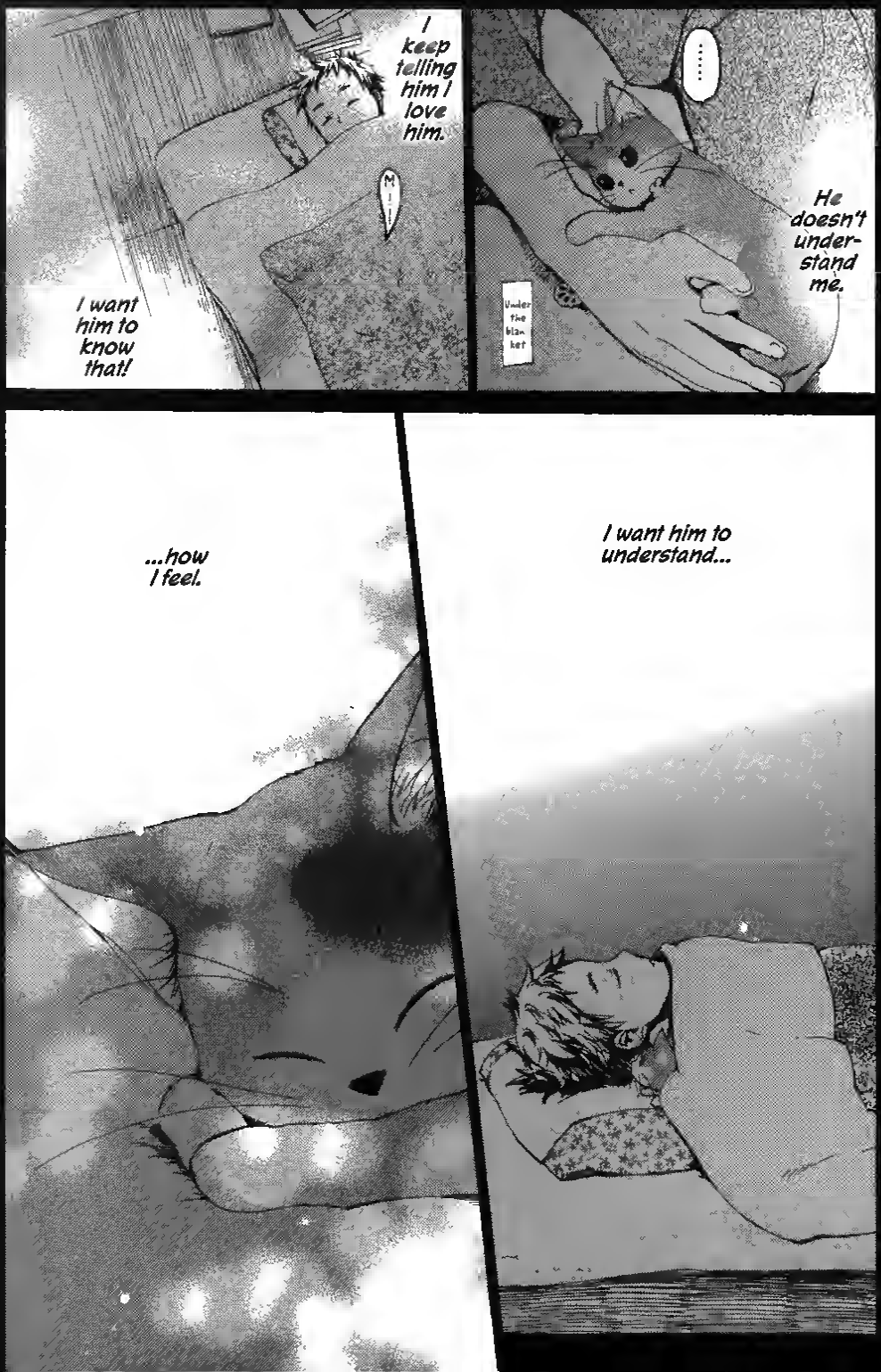

.....
... a long way to go.
I won an award, but I still have...
I'll get an earful if Mom or Chiyoko see it.
Now, where should I put it...?
Ha ha ha!
Ha ha ha ha ha!
Teruo was so happy.
He carried his award around the house and read it out loud over and over again.

Can't you take better care of yourself?
But then at some point...
...he hid it.
Honestly, Teruo...
...all right. I'll leave your medicine here.
Are you taking it?
Hmm?
How can you live like this?
I'll be fine.
Wouldn't you prefer to have someone else in your life? We could set you up with somebody...
I'm sorry.
I wish I could be here for you more, but...

There's no need for that.
I have Miiko.
Don't be ridiculous!
A cat can't take care of you!
I suppose not...
Stay warm and get better!
That...
My toys always went missing.
Whenever she visited, the house was always a bit cleaner after she left.
That was...


Sky.
Cloud.
Rainbow.
Pretty.
Miiko.
Come here.
ひょい
Miiko ...
My adorable Miiko.
I love you so much.

I love you too!
Hmm?
Mii...!
...I could understand human language.
Because the two of us talked so much...
Mii...
Okay.
Love!
Mii!
You're "Mii"? hungry?
You're so cute.
Okay, okay. Just be patient.
I'll get you some food.
I love you!
Miiieew!


I keep telling him I love him.
Mi-i
I want him to know that!
.....
He doesn't understand me.
Under the blanket
I want him to understand...
...how I feel.

Milko, are you cold?
Sorry— I was swel-tering.
Mii.
I was so hot, but look, it's snowing.
...Do you think there's something wrong with me?

Maybe I just hadn't realized that...
...we're actually living in...
...a cramped, cold place.

Is that what's going on?
What do you think...
...Miiko?

This is for you.
Mii --
Achoo!
.....
Just kidd--
.....

Oh, my cute little Miiko. I'm sorry.
I love you so much.
ぴとっ
Ha ha!
It's too cold for you to be angry, huh?
Mii...
Mii!
I'm sorry.
I'm sorry.
Don't be angry, okay?
Hey, Teruo.
I'm telling you that I love you!
Can you hear me?

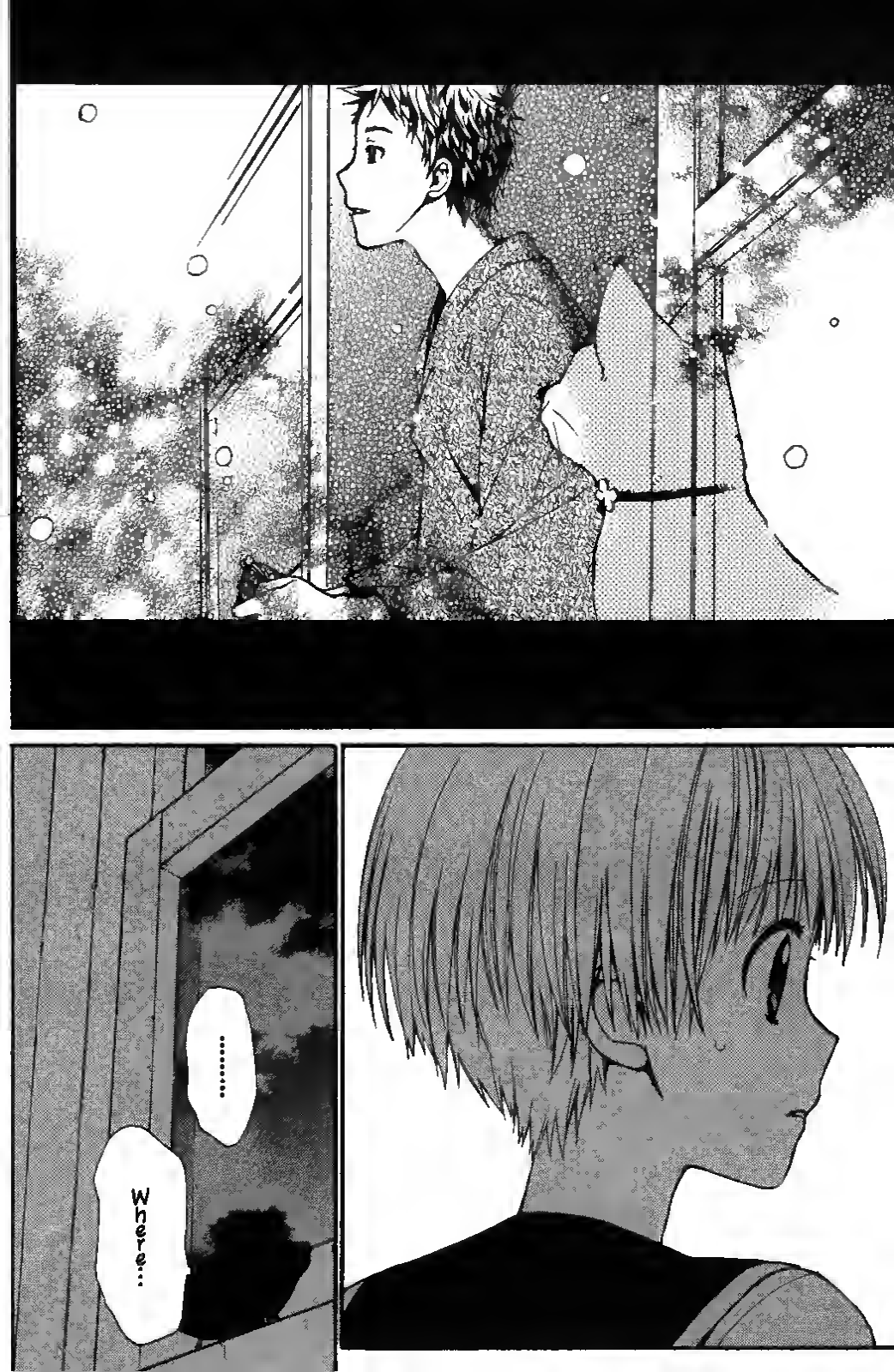
After that...
...the door was always left open.

Report.26 One Distant Morning

.....

Miiko...

...where did she...
She got up, but...
It's really dark out...
She's gone!
ばっ!!


.....
Where...

Time to eat!
Fukuta-san!
... where'd you go?
You're supposed to be helping!
Miiko...
This is our room...
... isn't it?
Carrot
Ume-chan! Do you know where Miiko is?
Huh? Suzuhara-san?
Fukuta-san.
What's wrong?
Nope.
Uh... Well...
Hey, have you guys seen Miiko?
Sorry!
.....
Gotcha! Thanks!
I don't think I've seen her...
Ah,

Why am I freaking out like this...?
I...I don't think...
...she's at school.
My stomach's in knots and my head's spinning...
Miiko!
Miiko!
Miiko--!
What should I do...?

What if I can't find her?
What if she disappears forever...?!
Miiko?!
What happened to Teruo-san, anyway?
Why'd I have that dream?

"Teruo is the most special person in the world to me!"
Oh no... At this rate--
At this rate...
Miiko!!!

A...A cliff...!

!
Watch out.
.....
Why're you out here so late? What happened?
Sorry.
Are you crying?
Fukuta-san...
It's nothing.

.....

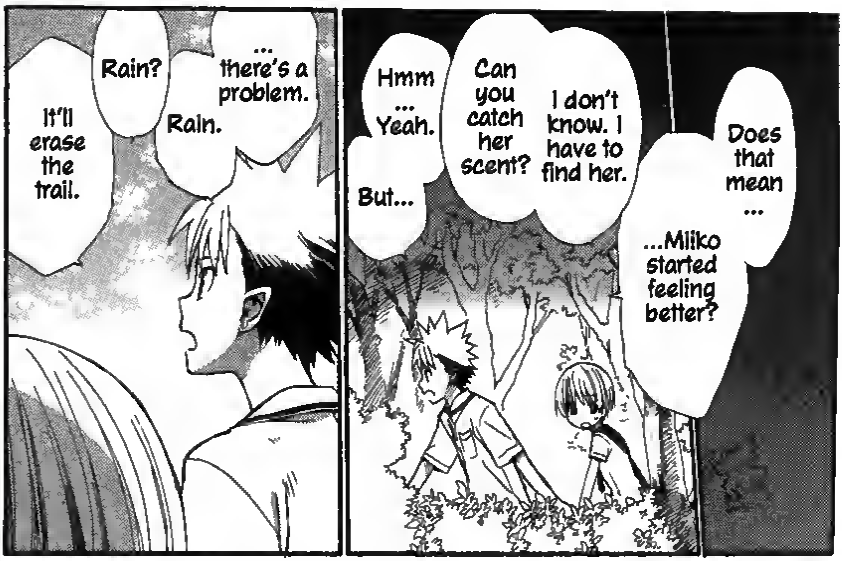
If Miiko ...
...goes away...
I... I...
And I ...
had...
... a weird ...
... dream.
Every-thing's...
...all messed up.
It's Miiko. She's gone.
She hasn't been eating, and she hasn't been to class...
...since she learned about death.

I don't know what I'll do!
ボロ
ボロ
O-okay ...
Take a deep breath, Fukuta-san.
Sniff ...
.....
Waaah...
So Suzuhara-san's missing?

And you ran off to find her by yourself?
.....
Y-yeah.
You really do...
...try to carry the weight of the world alone, huh?
Don't you know you've got friends you can count on?

It's a big school.
One person can't look everywhere.
I'll help you.
.....
.....
Don't worry.
If we split up, we'll find her. Okay?
Plus we have a really reliable guy...
...right behind us. See?
Who's crying?
Don't worry...
.....
...okay.

Kotaro!
Fune?
And Sasuke's here?

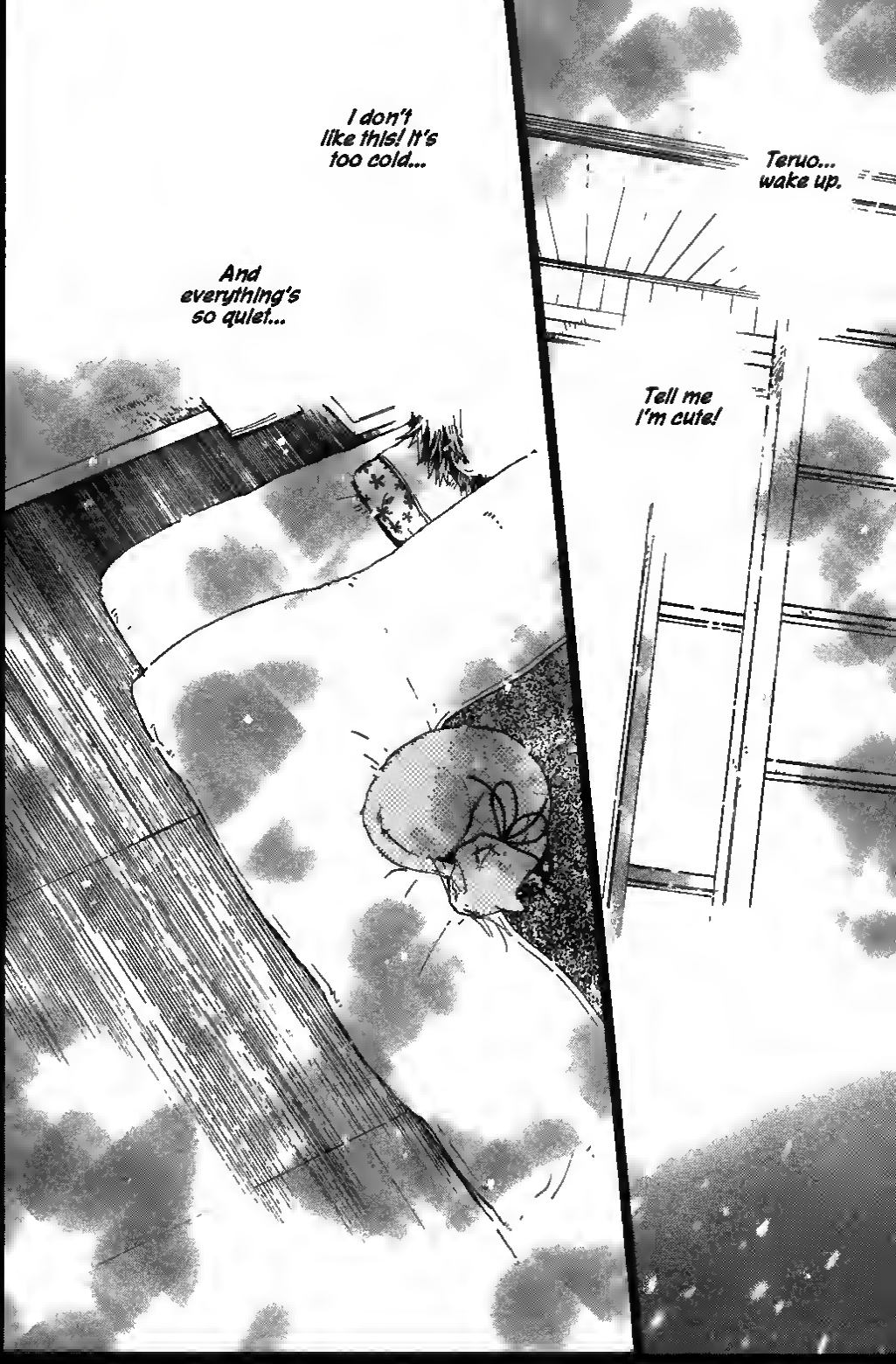

Does that mean ...
...Miiko started feeling better?
I don't know. I have to find her.
Can you catch her scent?
Hmm ... Yeah.
But...
... there's a problem.
Rain?
Rain.
It'll erase the trail.

A storm...
And Watanuki-sensei said a storm was coming.
Why did I have a dream like that?
It's got me so worried...
.....
We're close to the edge of the school grounds now.
Let's split up and check around the campus border and meet back here!
Kotaro!
Sure thing.

Miiko...
Maybe I was seeing the stuff I wanted Miiko to tell me.
.....
I'm right at the edge.
ぶん
ぶっ
But where's ...
きろ
きろ
...Miiko?

MIIKO?!

Oh!
Th-there you...
It's really you!
I'm so glad to see you...!
Mii.


I don't like this! It's too cold...
And everything's so quiet...
Teruo... wake up.
Tell me I'm cute!

And...
...they tried to take this.
I ran away from them.
I...want to see Teruo.
After a while, that lady came back.
.....
Then a lot of strangers arrived.
They...they took Teruo away...

I look like a human now, don't I?
If I can just see him again, everything will be fine.
I can turn into a human now, see?
Now he'll understand what I'm saying.

...don't I?
I want to see him.
I want to be with Teruo.

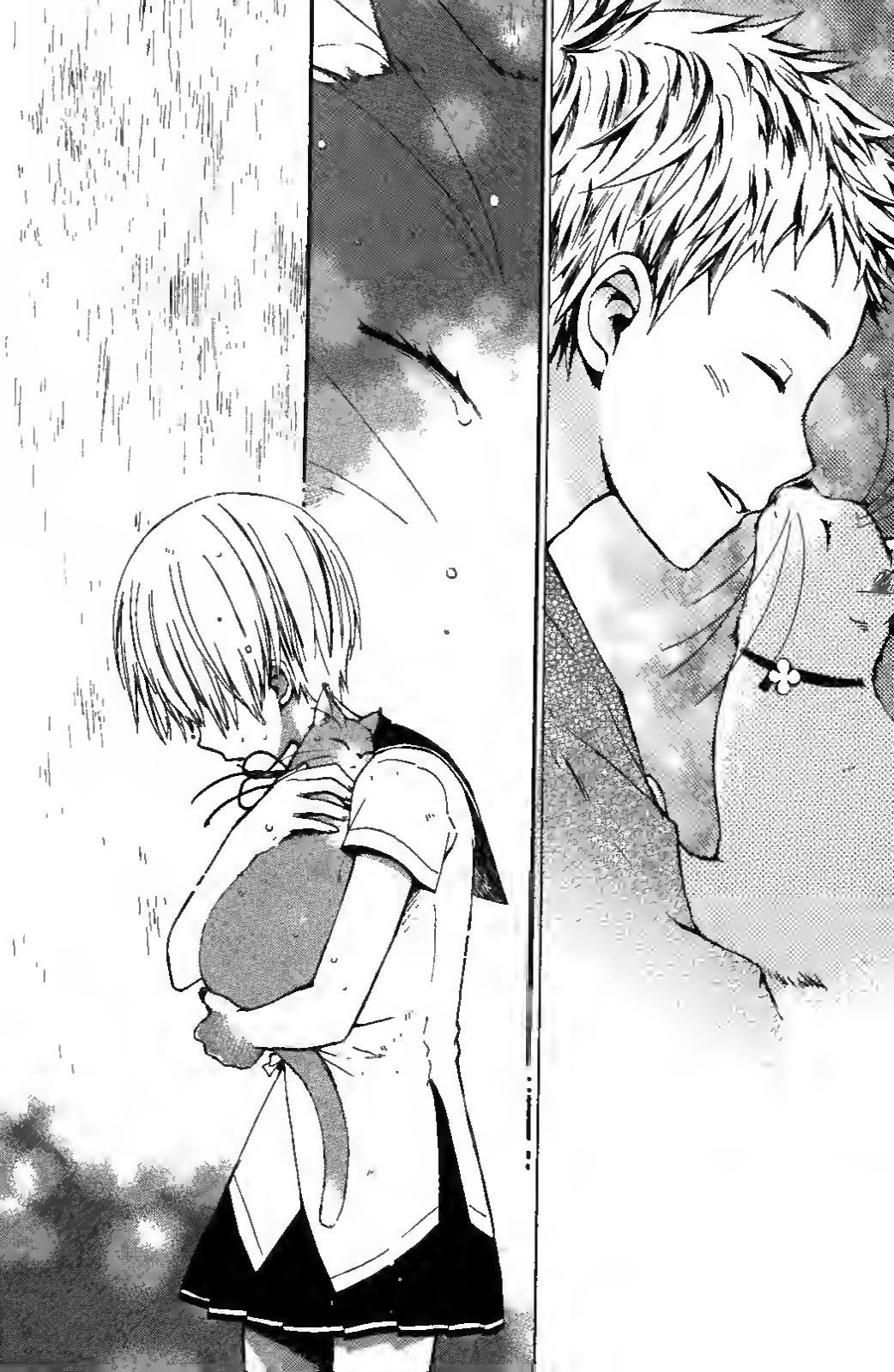
I'll be able to see him if I do, right?
I want to see him so much.
Fune!
Let me tell you more about him!
.....
He...he *can't*...
He can't really be gone...

Wh-why are you looking at me like that...?
.....

I had a dream with Miiko in it.
.....
I saw everything.
.....
I'm so sorry...
ぎゅう

"I'm sorry..."
"...Miiko."
.....

"My cute little Miiko."
"I love you."



Miiko! I found...
...you.
Shh.
.....
She's a-sleep?
.....
Can I touch her? Just a little?
Er... I'm not... ... sure ...
I didn't know...
...what I'd do if Miiko was really gone.

Where's Sasuke?
Oh.
.....
... yeah.

!
You found her?
Great!
There you are!

Oh... I can see a lot more clearly now.
Yay, found!
Come on!
Let's hurry back.
I think the rain's gonna get worse.
Watch your step.
It's hard to see with all this rain.
You want one, Kotaro?

Kotaro ...
Sasuke kun...
Thank you
.....
There's something else...
...I ought to say...
.....
ガシッ!

There was...

...something I wanted...

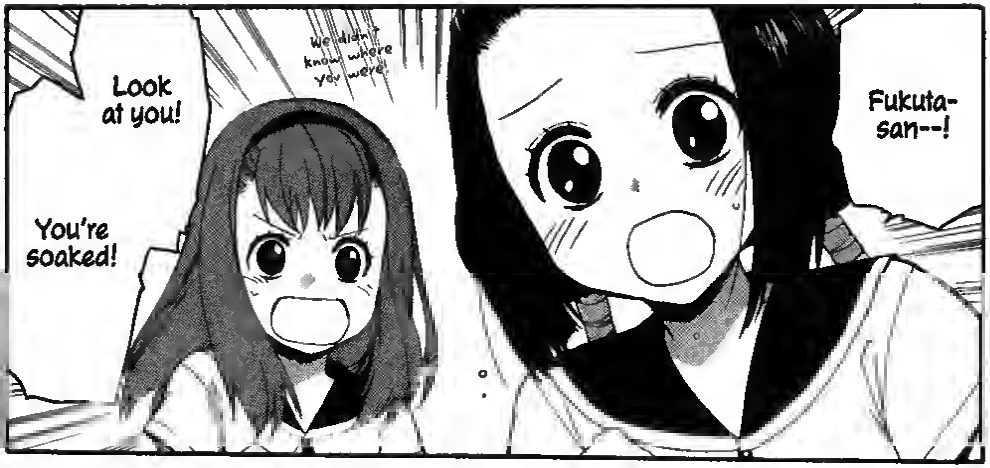
...to say to Sasuke-kun, but nothing came out.

"Thank you" ...?
I don't deserve that.

Are you crying down there?
Guess not.
.....
Shouldn't you be working?
Don't change the subject.
Who sent you here?
I just can't figure it out.

We looked everywhere for you, and then you turned up *here.*
You refuse to come home, and you won't even send word that you're alive...
.....
Whatever. Why not just let them think I'm dead?
You idiot!
I told them about you ages ago.

The real question here is, who are you working for? And what're you trying to do?


Fukuta-san--!
We didn't know where you were
Look at you!
You're soaked!

It really is...
...a storm out there.
Here, take this towel!
Dry off and get changed.
Uh huh...

!!!
ガクッ
.....

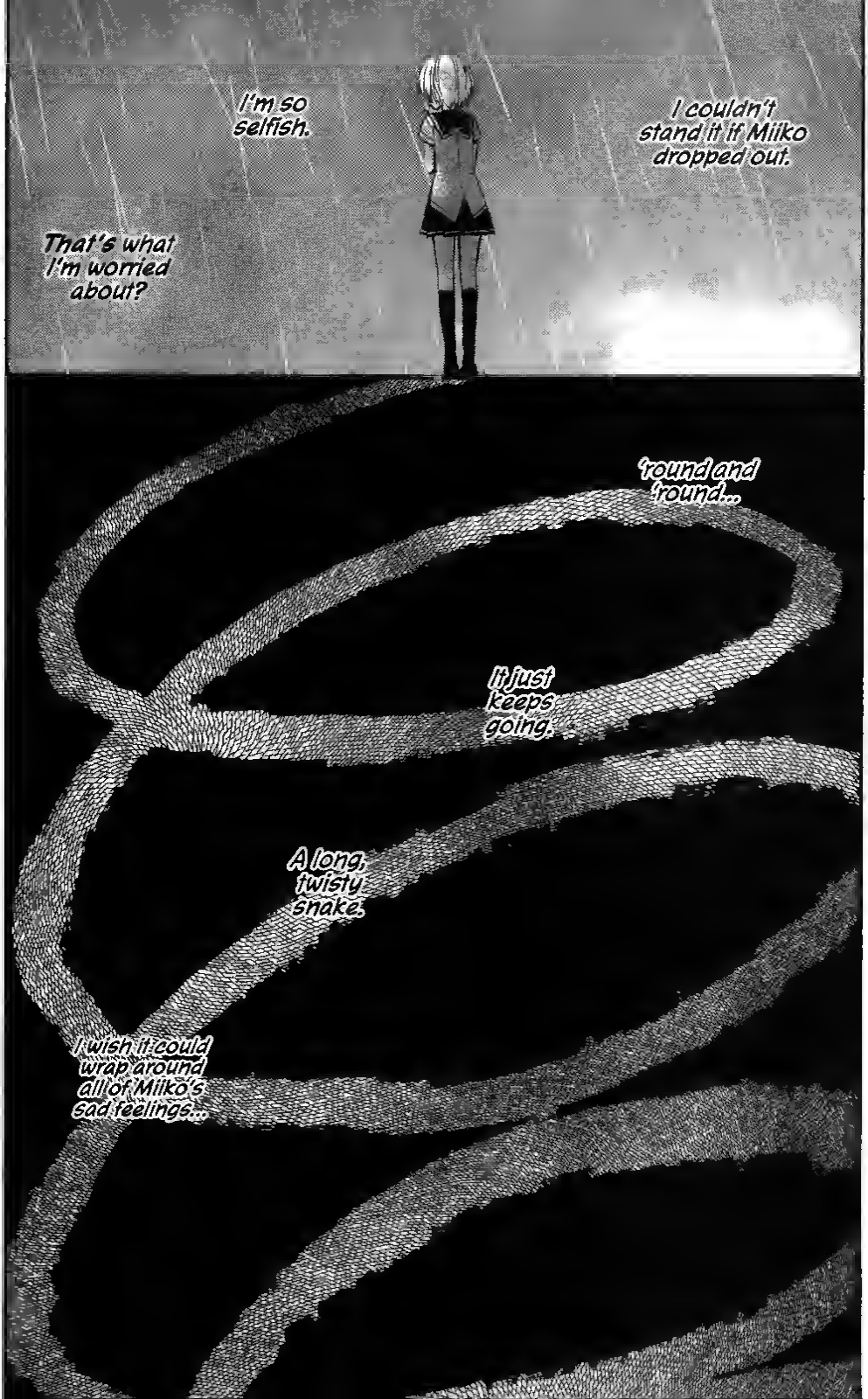
Yeah, I got...
...rained on...
...a little.

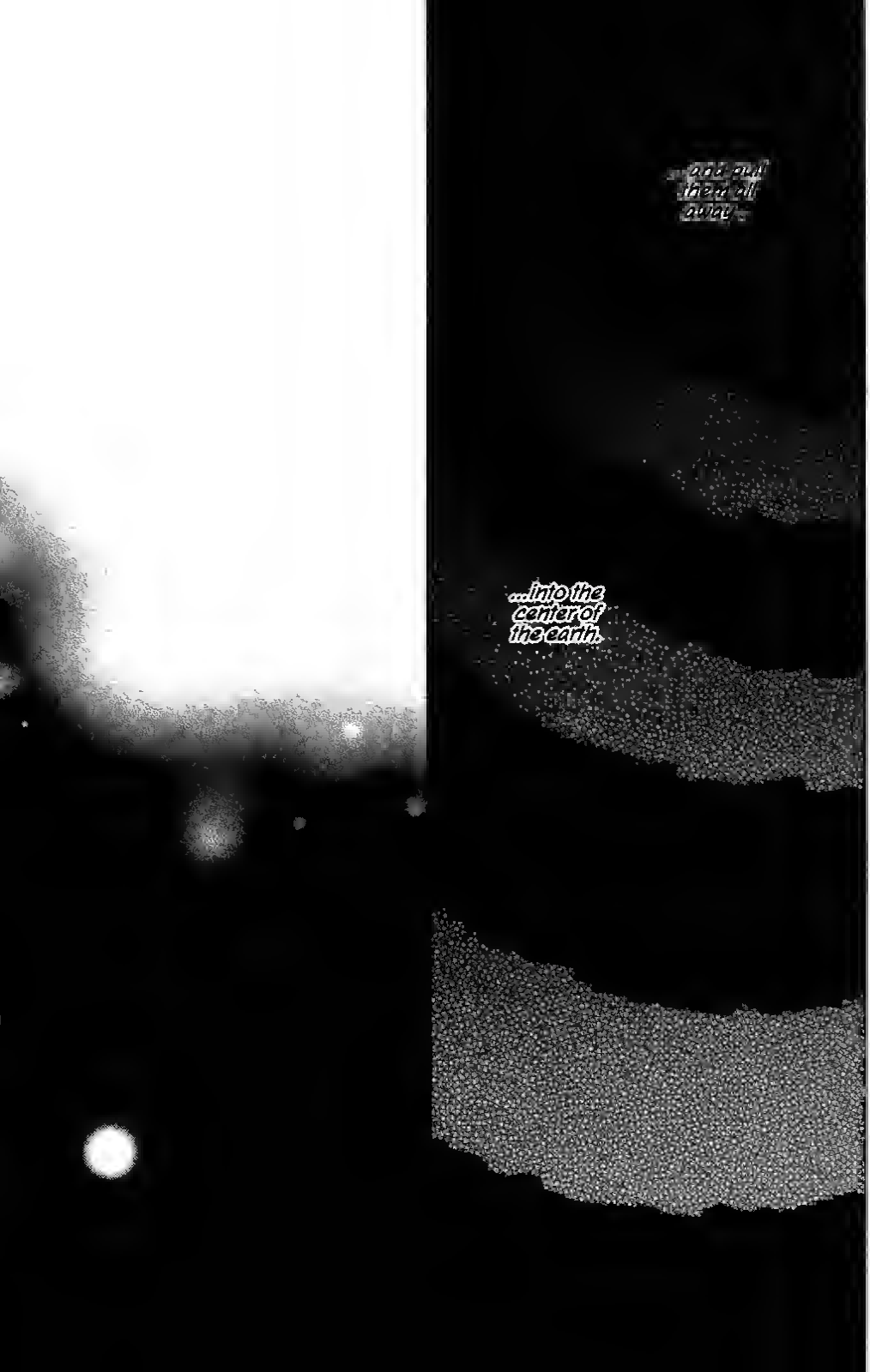
Everything's going white...

But I found Milko...

...so why do I still feel this way?

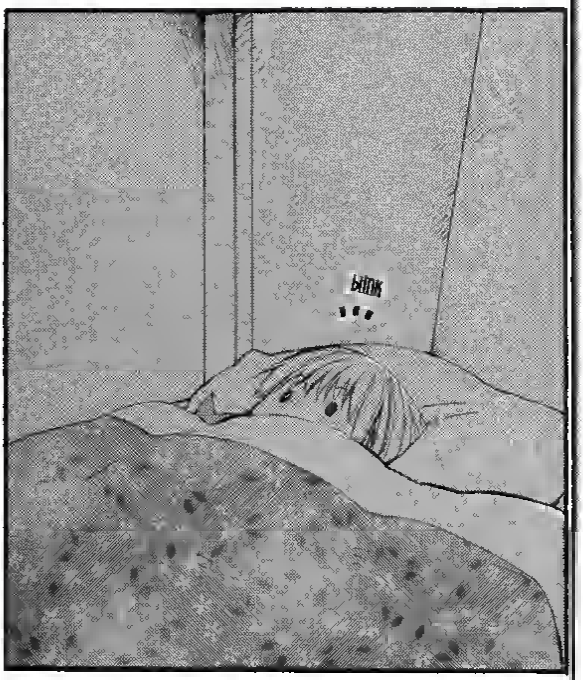
Will it come true?
She wrote that wish on her Tanabata card.
"I want to see Teruo."
"I want to see him."
What will Miiko do...?
...she finds out it can't?
Oh no.
"Let me see him!"


I'm so selfish.
I couldn't stand it if Miiko dropped out.
That's what I'm worried about?
'round and 'round...
It just keeps going.
A long, twisty snake.
I wish it could wrap around all of Miiko's sad feelings...

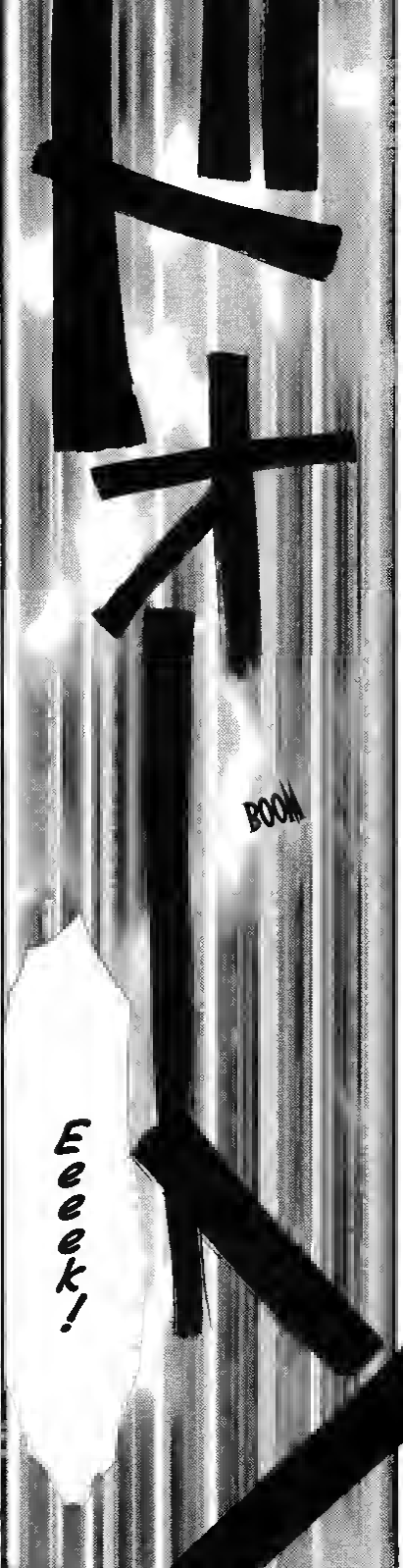

...and all
that's left
over...
...into the
center of
the earth.

Should I...
...lock this...
...away?

Report.27 Sasuke


blink

Whoa, what was that...?
Just thunder, I guess.


BOOM
Eeeek!

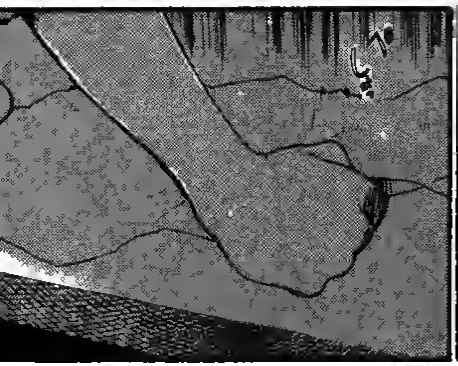
.....
I'm in my room...
I guess I passed out.
Oh, I remember. I brought Miiko back...
...and then everything went white.

Miiko...
"Eep"?
Eep!
FLASH
BOOM
CLICK

What's the matter?
Oh! Um...
Here.
Ume-chan?!
I-I didn't know when to bring them to you...
Rice balls! Sweet!
Oh, sure! Make yourself at...
Could I... hang out in your room?
I'm afraid of thunder.
Um—
W-well... See...
Oh...?
That's good.
This is great! I'm so hungry! Thanks!
GROWL

flash
... home
Eeek!
MIIIKO!
That was freaky!
BOOM
.....
ガシッ!!
ぎゅっ

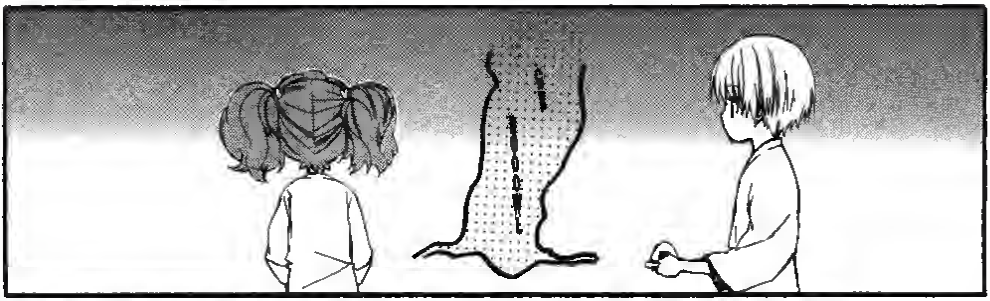
びっしょ…


しょ…

Oh...
Teruo-san's award got all wet...

"I want to see him!"

"I want to see Teruo!"
Miiko ...


I'm home!

Mm?

SNIFF
SNIFF
SNIFF

Can I eat these?
Hey...

!
Right, Ume-chan?
S-sure...
Plus she's eating something Ume-chan made!
You bet! Eat up!
She's finally eating!
It's been days since she ate anything.
Why's there a raccoon in here?
I-I'm sorry!
Did the thunder scare you into raccoon shape...?

I'm just so scared.
I feel like I'll lose my mind if I'm alone.
I'm sorry...
Listen, Miiko-- Ume-chan made those rice balls, so--
Transform and then ask.
I don't wanna talk to a raccoon.
Can I just sit quietly in the corner...?
Er...

オお
Eeeek!
BOOM!
もぐもぐ
H-hold it! Save some food for me!
Mi--
Miiko, come on!
ぷるぷる
BOOM!
It was a real storm outside.
ぴぴぴ
What's the magic word, Fune?
And I'm hungry too! At least leave me one!
Well, I'm hungry.

Sniff
.....
It's over now
But we had a little storm of our own indoors.
I guess Suzuhara-san fell asleep.
Yeah, I bet she was tired.
I'm glad she ate some-thing.
She seems ...
...to be feeling better. That's good.
.....
Yeah.
Zzz...
Zzz...
Miiko wasn't angry or crying.
I wasn't expecting that.

"I want to see him."
"I look like a human now! I can speak now!"
"I want to see Teruo!"
It's like I just imagined...
...everything that happened.
We finished the Obon festival at school today.
We lit some pretty paper lanterns.
I wish Suzuhara-san had been there to see them...
I'm glad the storm held off until now.

Sensei was worried too.
So you two brought those back here?
You might want to give them back to Sensei tomorrow.
I guess we should, huh?
.....
Yeah.
Thanks, Ume-chan.
Come crash with us anytime, okay?
T-thank you.
It's awfully sad being in a room by yourself.

I hope he did.
If Miiko tells me he did, I'll believe her.
Maybe Teruo-san paid us a visit when I wasn't looking...
...so he could spend some time with Miiko.

I promise I'll believe you, so...
...please don't leave.

The next day...
...Miiko was back in class.
Miiko!
Good morning--!

Stop touching me!
Nothing's changed at all.
Miiko was crying.
She cried so hard, but...
...now it's as if nothing happened.
I wonder ...
...if she's all better...
...now?

I guess missing those classes was bad...
You're supposed to come talk to me
Shouldn't you have said something too, Miiko?
About what?
Conference Room
Thanks for your help.
About *what*...?
ﾐｷｯ
What'll I do if Miiko drops out?

Miiko...
...you sure you're okay?

You're acting weird.
Nah, it's nothing.
.....

It really is like nothing happened.

Huh...? Yup.
I ate plenty and slept for a long time.

Miiko's still with us.
She's still here.
Very good.
Now take a look at this.
You have three threes.
Things'll start coming together for you once you get the hang of addition and multiplication.
Three sets of three equals how many?
Nine!
Raise your hand!

That did her in on the last test.
Circle
Circle
No spelling mistakes this time!
Go all out!
Learn the times table!
Learn the new grammar!
Things are normal now...
...so I've gotta study!
Circle...
.....

"Have faith in me."
"I'll..."
"... protect you."
Aargh!
Why "aargh"?!
What in the world are you doing now?
Huh...?
Uh... A... monkey?
In the middle of class?
S-sorry...
...I just remembered that.

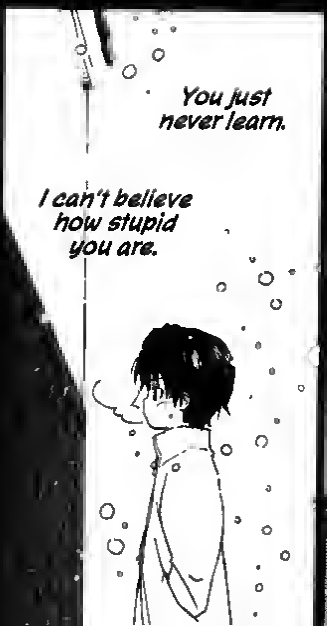
What am I to Sasuke-kun?
A friend?
That doesn't seem quite right...
You really aren't trying to hide it.

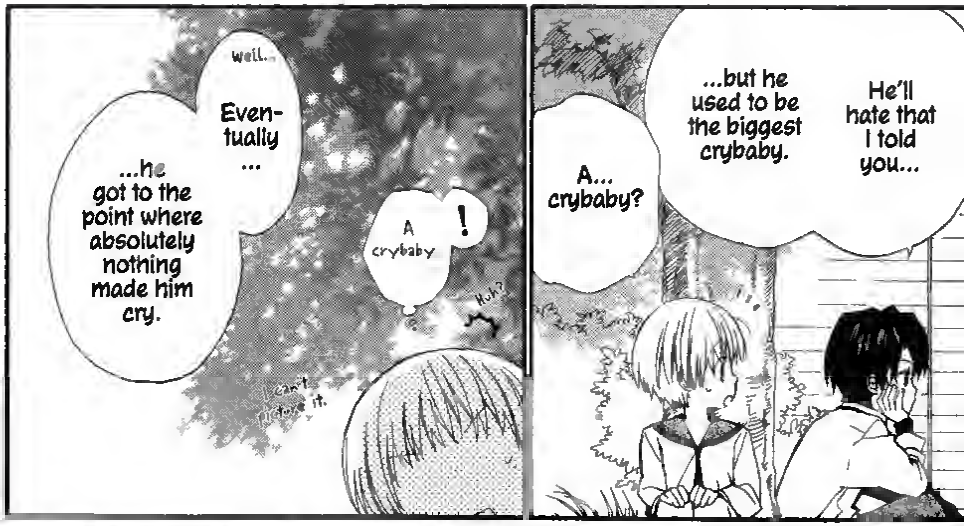
Wow ...
Were you really that surprised?
Y-Yu---
--suke-
-kun!
Aaaahh!
Cut to the Bird's
Thinking about Sasuke?
.....
No ...
This isn't--
Since when could you sense anything?
As if!
I-I didn't sense you at all...
Well?
Have you...
...noticed anything about him recently?

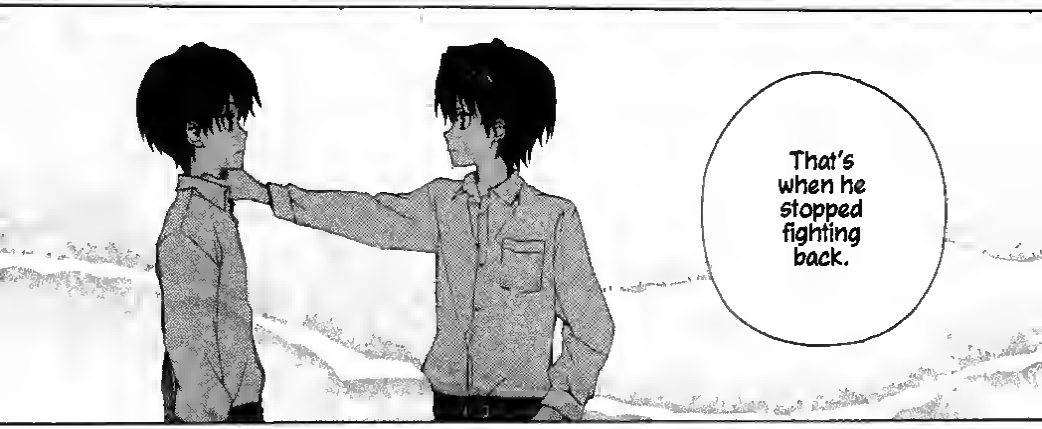
Sasuke-kun watches people carefully.
Yeah?
That's how it looks, but... something's off about him.
Right.
But I think ...
... he's really nice.
.....
That's all I've got.
Nice try.
None of that's news to me.
He's kind, right?
Y-yes ...
Seems like he'd die to protect you?
Uh ...?
But the thing is...
...that's all just because he doesn't give a darn about himself. He genuinely believes he's worthless.
I think that's a pretty crappy way to live.

I guess it's my fault, though.
Sasuke and I are kinda like the poster kids for bullies and victims.
Huh?
Really?!
What do you mean?
We were perfect equals at first...
...but...
This was a while ago.
Back then, we spent every day...
...facing off against each other.
One day I'd win, another day I'd lose. Sometimes it'd be a tie.
But that didn't last for long.
...we were surrounded by adults who had a lot of strict rules.

When did I start looking down on you like that?




He'll hate that I told you...
...but he used to be the biggest crybaby.
A... crybaby?
Well...
Eventually ...
...he got to the point where absolutely nothing made him cry.
A crybaby
!
Huh?
I can't believe it.

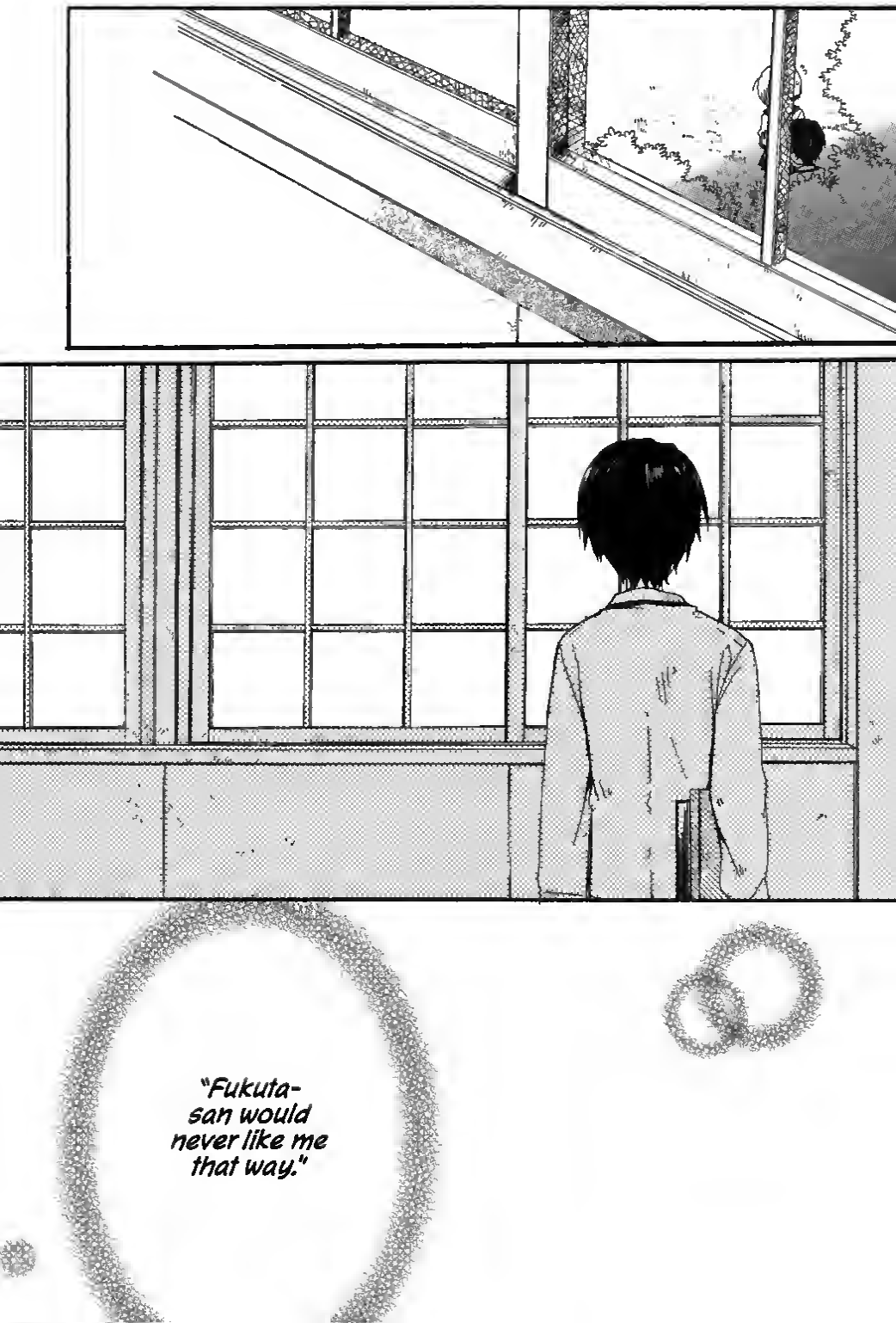

That's when he stopped fighting back.

Not crying and never arguing must've been how he decided to rebel.
I bet he could survive any kind of torture now.

Weil, that's what i know about Sasuke.
i don't need much more than that.
Oh... I see...
Kids are really scary.
Once they get mad, things keep escalating.
.....
He completely disappeared from human society. Some people assumed he'd died.
So now my goal is to figure out exactly where he stands...
...as my brother, and as a human being.
i can't do that without figuring out what he's doing here.

So you don't hate Sasuke-kun, then?
He sure is hard to handle these days.
.....
Well, I get to see what's coming.
Hm.
Sure!
Wait, what--?
I need you to take over from here.
That's great!
Seducing him should be easy...
...for a ninja club member!

Ninja Tactics:
Use seduction to get information out of your target!
Guys can do it too!
You just need to trick them.
Seducing him?!
I-I'm not...
...good at...
...acting...
...and stuff.
I don't think...
?!!
You're obviously head over heels for him.
Who said anything about acting?
It's love!
So you'd better just tell him how you feel.
Don't forget-- he's really dense.
.....


"Fukuta-san would never like me that way."

So my feelings are...
He said that loud and clear.
"... smile for me."
"...just how much he likes her."
"...the most special person in the world to me!"
They're ...

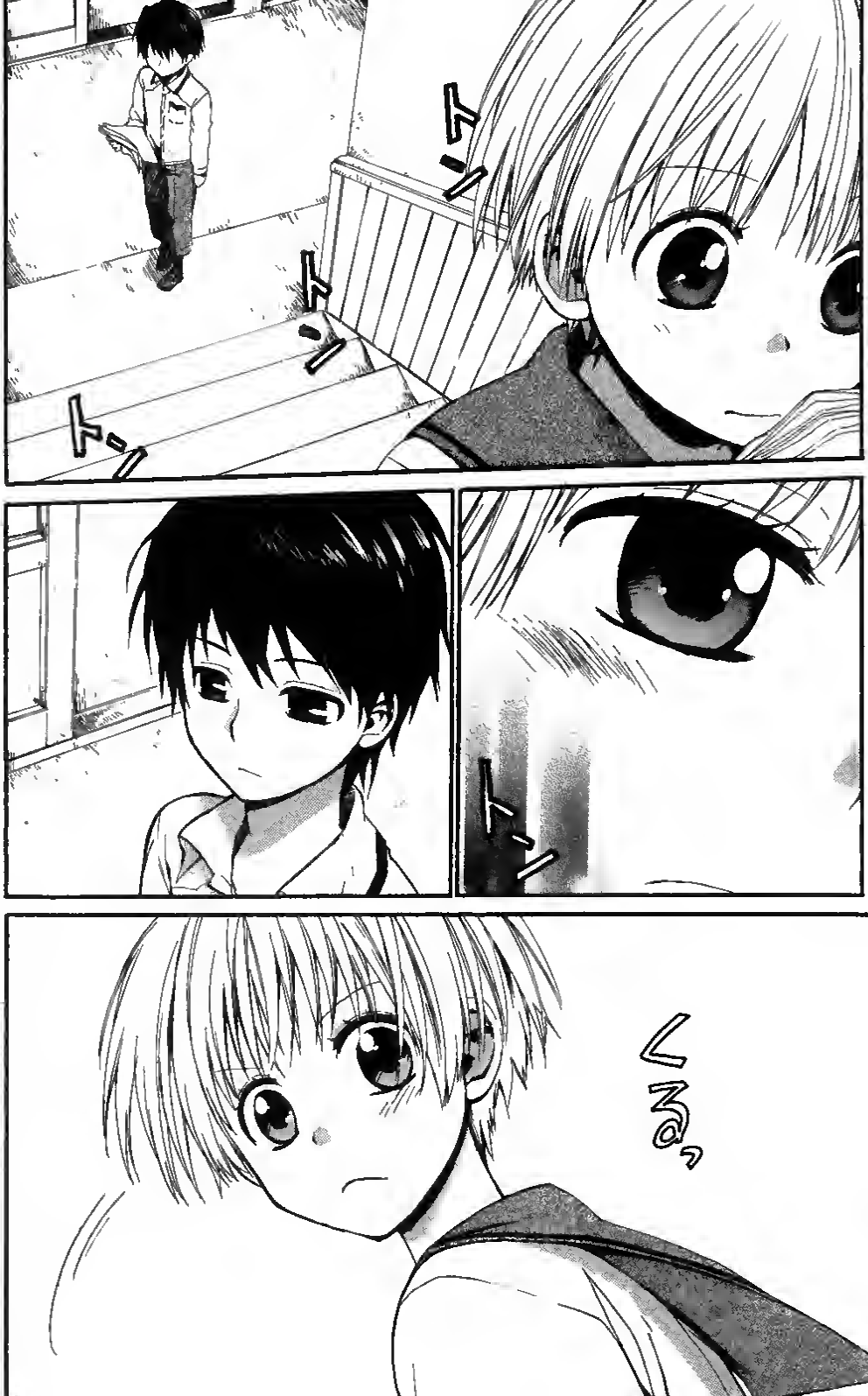
I've never felt like this before.
The truth is, I don't know anything about him.
Sasuke-kun is full of mysteries.
There's so much I want to ask him...
...that it's driving me crazy.
But I'm glad...
...I got to learn a little about him today.
Keh.

Do Miiko and Ume-chan think about stuff like that?
Is that what helps them try so hard?
.....
That's really incredible.
I hope I can be like that.
Look at Miiko-- she came here all alone for Teruo-san's sake!
Even if we don't talk all that much...
I think that would make me feel really good.
Then we can walk on the same path, like equals.

I'll try my hardest.
I can do this!
Fukuta-san!
.....
Yes?!
Oh! Sasuke-kun!
You've been leaving a trail of these.
Wa-?!
Huh?

?
Are those handouts for next class?
Yup!
Need a hand?
Sensei gave them all to me.
I'm fine!
Th-thanks.
Feels like another storm might be coming.
The wind's so strong today.
Go on ahead.
We might get more wind.
You'll bring them for me...?
I may as well carry the ones I picked up.
Okay, then.

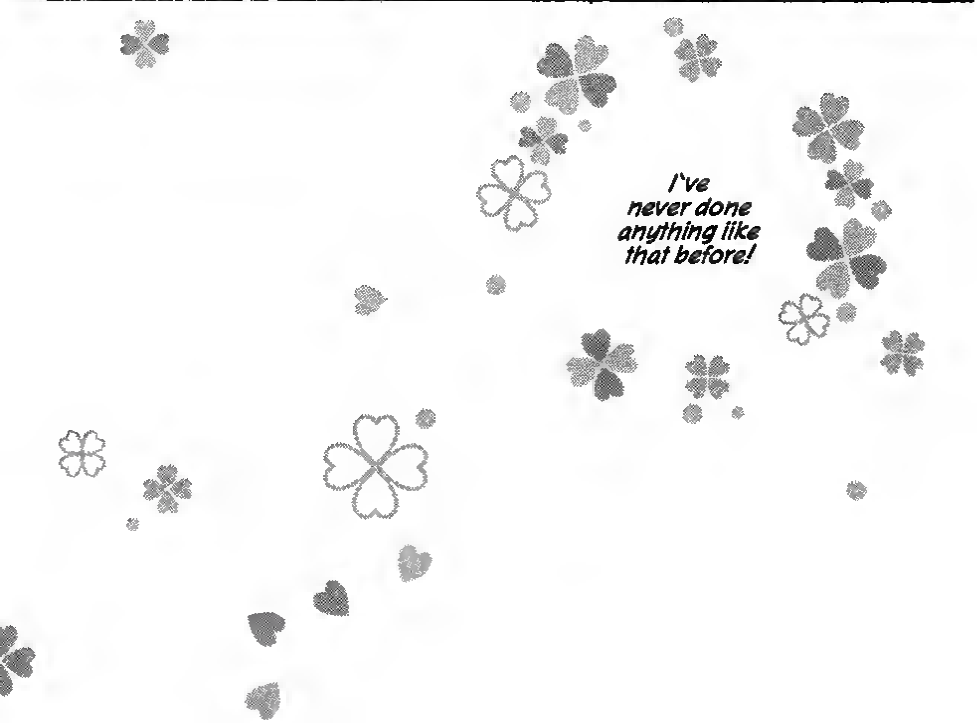
Thank you!
Just pretend nothing happened ...
... and go ahead.
Got it!
.....


トン
トン
トン
トン
ふぅ。

Sasuke-kun!
I really like you!

.....
.....
You... Huh...?
Er...
Bye now!
dash!
I said it!
I actually did it!
What just happened?!

Miiko! Miiko--! i can't wait to tell you!
I wonder what he thinks?
i said it!


I've never done anything like that before!

Report.28 It's Another Rainy Day

I told him how I feel.
...Fukuta-san.
Fukuta-san!
Afterward I was so nervous I couldn't even look at him.
I feel like I already used up all of my energy for today.
Bye now
Your food is--
Hun?
Whoops!
You're strange.
Could I... spend the night with you...?
So... Um...
I-I heard some thunder earlier.
Yeah, of course!
Right, Miiko?
Fine.

I must not be the only one using up lots of energy.
I can do this!
I'm not alone.
Miiko's in love too.
Thank you.
Ume-chan's in love.
But... hold on.
.....
We're friends. We help each other out!
I have to tell Miiko what happened.
So about yester-day...
What if I don't tell her and then Sasuke-kun's like...
What should I do?
That'd be awkward.
She seems okay, but maybe it'd be insensitive to mention it.
Miiko loves Teruo-san, right?

That was my first time telling somebody I like them.
What should I do, Miiko?
I'm sorry, Miiko...
Wow.
I can't believe I did it.
Fune?
.....
... sorry.
Stop crushing me like that!
Today, I...
Miiko, you know what?

You're really weird today.
?
Are you listening?
...I told him I...
I...
There, there.
It'll be all right.

.....
And I...
Miiko loves Teruo-san.
The thing is...
...I told Sasuke-kun I like him.

.....
Okay.
I said it...
Uh...
.....
ふぅ

She heard me too?!
Um...
So ...
Sorry.
Huh?
Well ...
Fukuta-san, you and Sasuke-kun...?
Ume-chan ...
How long have you--
オロオロ
Good luck!
Okay?
Um, yeah!
ニコニコ
What's going through her head, exactly?
?
Right.
I see how it is.
Yeah.

ピカッ
That was a bright flash.
I'm surrounded by...
...people who're much more experienced than me.
ゴロ
ゴロ
How're you holding up, Ume-chan?
I'm okay.
ドン
BOOM
ゴロゴロ
Sorry for inconveniencing you like this.
But... I'm *not* alone.
Thank you.
I'd probably pass out if I were alone.

Sasuke-kun...
...might reject me tomorrow.
I'm afraid, but...
...if that happens, I'll just try hard to become better friends with him.
Sasuke-kun sure was...
...surprised.
Now that I think about it...
...maybe today wasn't the best day to tell him.
じわわ…
But it's too late now.
There's no going back.

I guess these tears are just like my feelings.
They're right out in the open.
Good night...
...you two.
Why am I crying?
Seriously, what the heck?
Sniffle
It's like everything that was filling my head is draining out.
All the air's leaving my lungs.
My strength's melting away.
I feel so dizzy...
...but I keep picturing Sasuke-kun's face.

Fukuta confessed to Sasuke?!
She said she liked Sasuke.
Is somebody spreading rumors?
Wow!
It's not a rumor! He *heard* her!
Word's getting around fast.

What did you do to Fukuta-san?
Nothing.
She started feeling that way all on her own.
Liar.
Ha ha!
What, you think I hypnotized her?
Maybe you egged her on.
Maybe you pressured her...
...or made some kind of twisted deal.

C'mon, don't get all defensive just 'cause you've never been Mr. Popularity.
So, what was it like...
...hearing her say she loved you?
If you don't care, maybe I should take her.

Ooh, looks like you *do* care.
.....
Get out.
C'mon! Just give me a hint.
Then you can get as lovey-dovey as you want--
Get out!

No street shoes in the dorm.
Looks like someone's got a bad attitude.
Keeping your mouth shut isn't always the smartest move.

Is that why you're using Fukuta-san?!
You're pathetic!
I'm pathetic? Projecting much?
Do you think you can turn her down without hurting her feelings?
You must be right on the edge by now.
.....

Sasuke!
パン
Oh! Sasuke--
Hey!
Hey, is the stuff they're saying true?

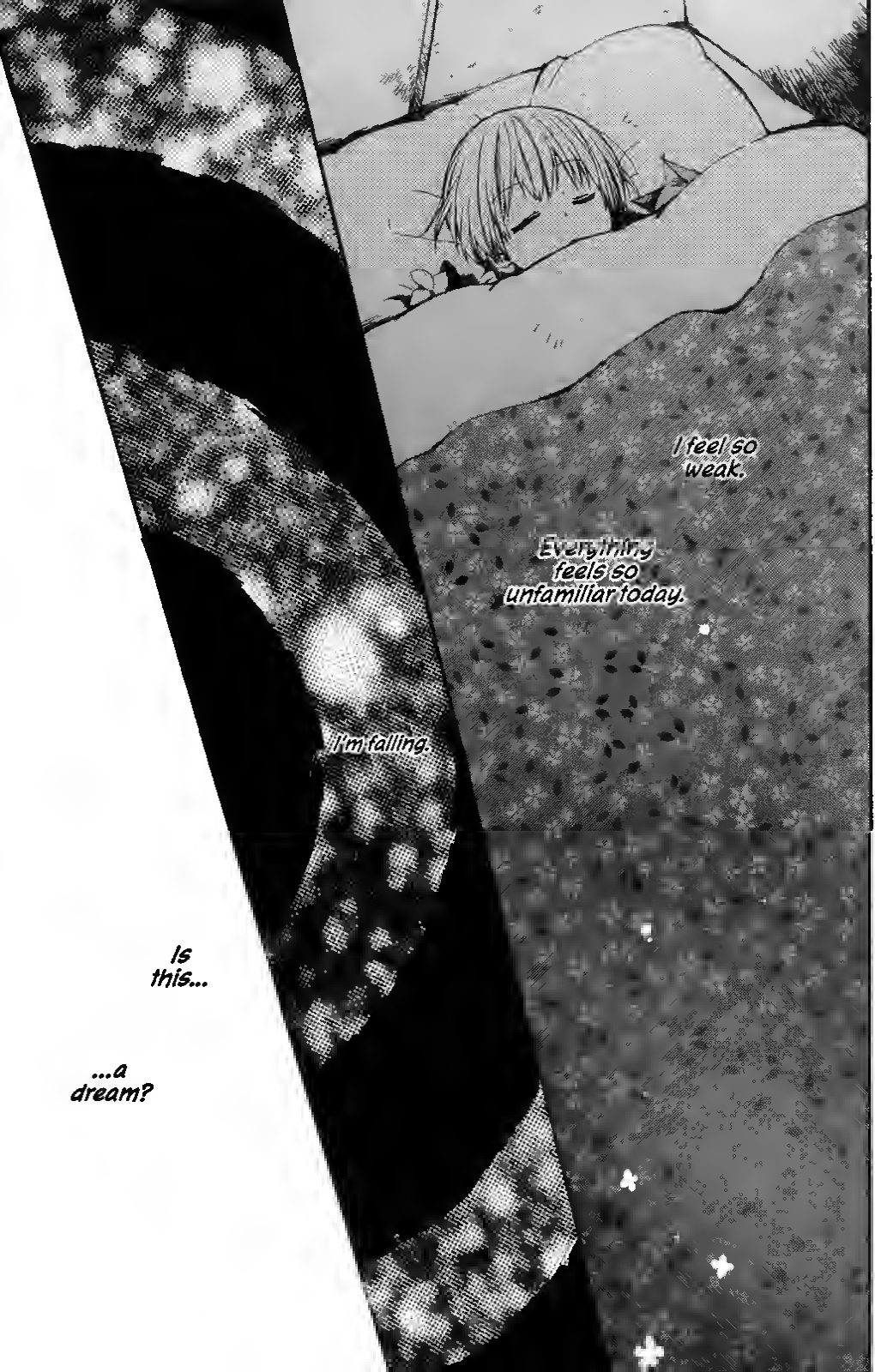
ぱしっ
.....
Sasuke?
GASP
.....
I'm sorry.
?

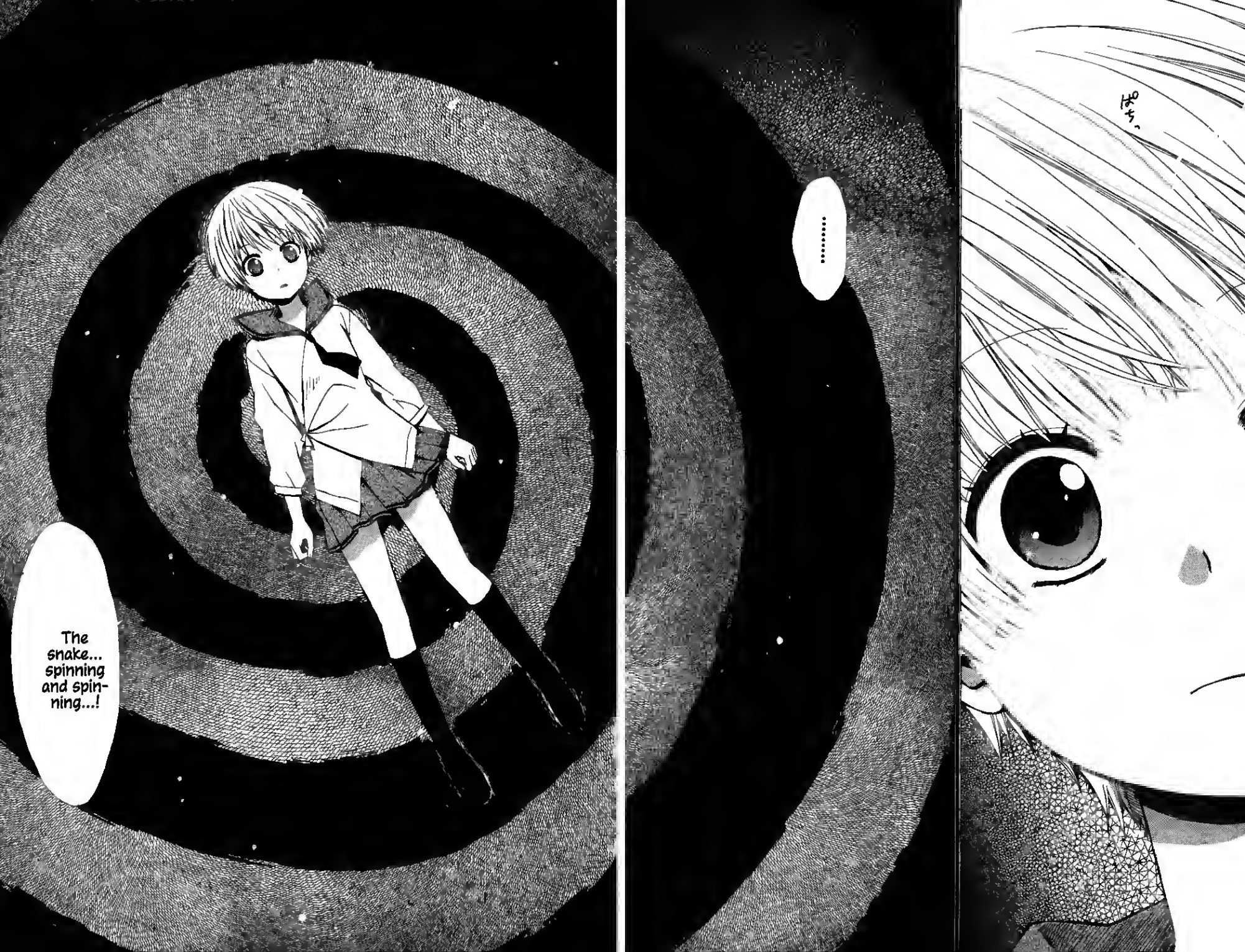
Wow, that one was close!
I bet it hit the bamboo grove!
Where?!
Kotaro! Sasuke!
The lightning--
The window's rattling
What did you just say?
.....
BOOOM
I'm sorry about Takuma-kun.

.....
.....
Sas...
.....
Huh?

Sasuke!
ズル
ズル
SLIDE
Hey, you okay?
Sensei --!
Someone go get Sensei!

キリ
アアアアアアア


I feel so weak.
Everything feels so unfamiliar today.
I'm falling.
Is this...
...a dream?


The snake... spinning and spinning...!
.....
Hm.

It's like...
...I'm gonna be sucked down into the dark.
Eep!
Spinning and spinning...
Spinning...
...snake.
What about...a snake...?
Wh...
Wh-who are you?
.....?
Snake...?
It's shaking...

.....
It smiled!
GRIN
?
I...think.
A beautiful woman's hands...
?

...lock this..
...away?
Shall I...
.....
Why?
Where?
Lock...
...it away?

"Why"...?
?
.....
Huh?
Um...
She seems so... wavery.
.....
What...
...is it?
What do you want to lock up?

?
Drawers?
.....
You want to put something in them?
She smiled again.
.....
But ...hat...
...are these?

What ...?

ガバッ
……！
……？
Fukuta-san?

Huh?
Oh.
Mor-
ning.
Mor-
ning.
Of
course. It's
morning.
What?
He
collapsed?!

He just needs some rest
Something about not eating and not sleeping and doing too much.
That's what Sensei said
He's sleeping in the infirmary right now.
W-why?
Is he okay?
Yeah, last night. Out of no-where.
Yeah.
I see...
So you said you liked him, Fune?
... huh?
Wha?!
He read my mind?
How'd he know?
What if it's my fault?
Be-cause I told him how I feel...
..that makes no sense

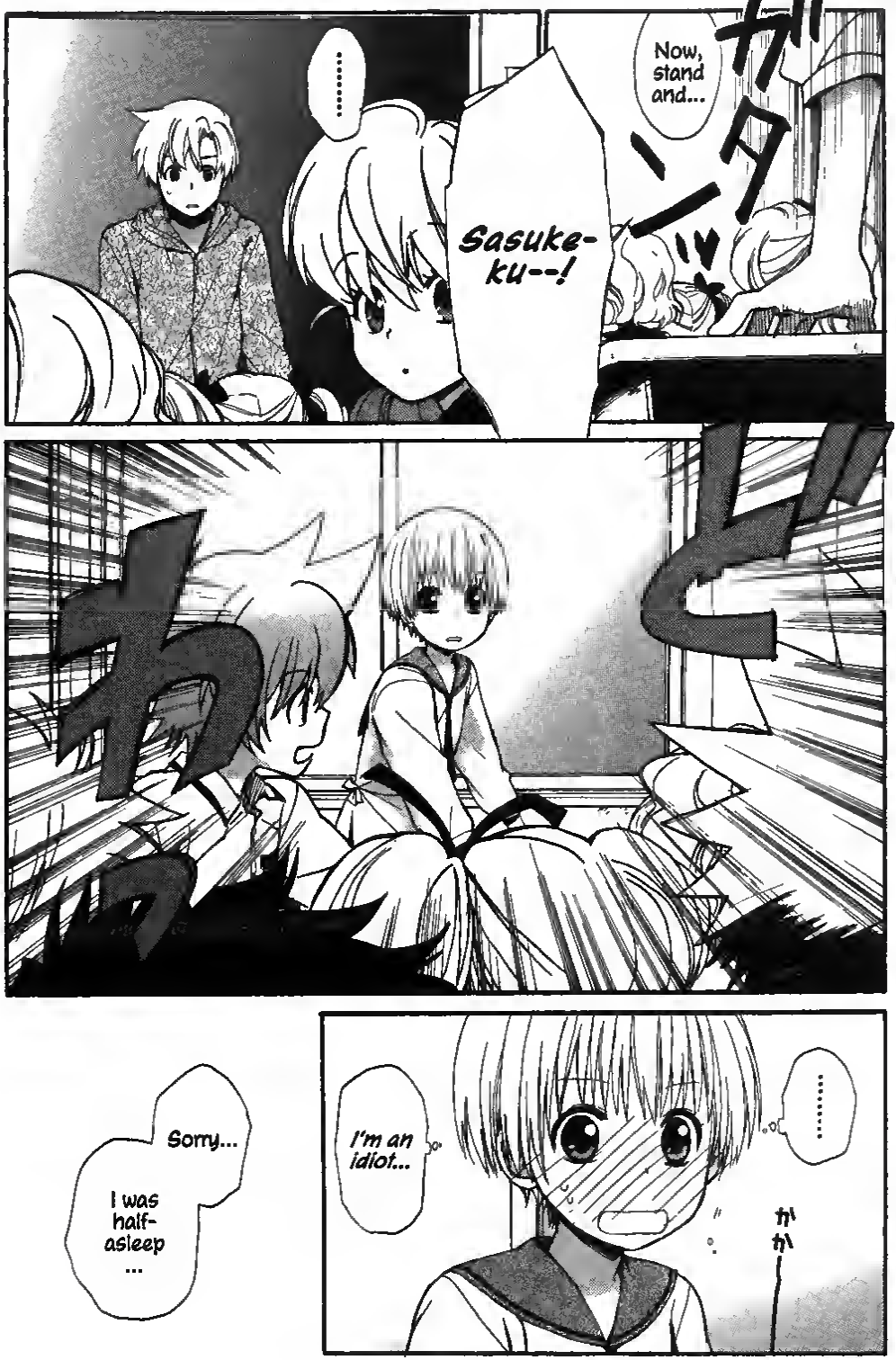
Yeah ...
Okay ...
Ergh...
Great ...
Every-one knows.
Ruka saw you.
.....
You know ...
So let's not...
... Sasuke-kun just collapsed.
But...
Yeah.
Also, the ground is probably soft from all the rain, so be careful when playing outside.
There might be soil or trees that are about to give way.
Try to stay away from any area where lightning struck.

Who was that person?
That dream I had ...
Is he using this... ...to avoid me?
I'm so confused.
No, that's not it.
I'm sure I touched something.
...black shadow?
What was that...
I touched someone.

Wait!
Where are you going?
Why are you crying?
Huff!
Huff...
Huff!
Huff!
Sob!
Hic!
Huff!
Huff!
Night's coming.
I'm scared.

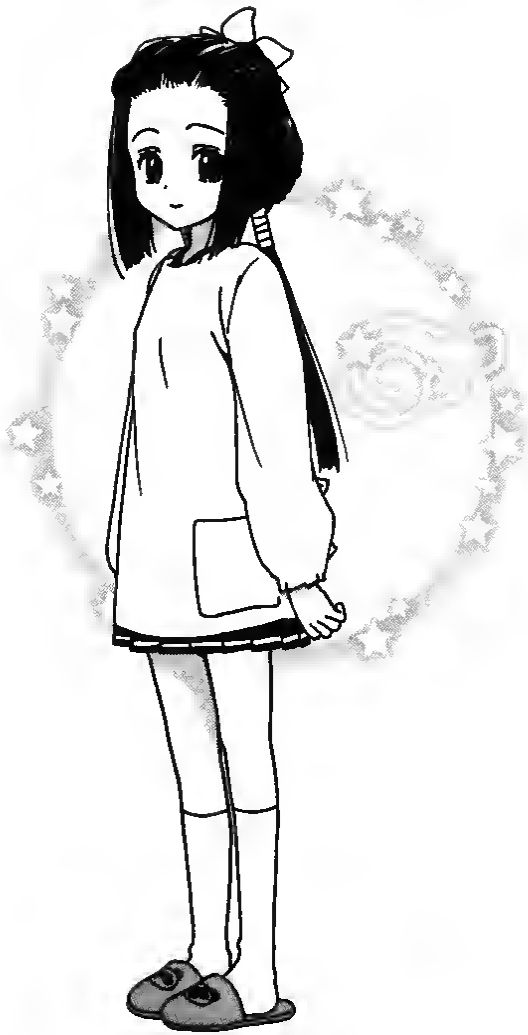
The darkness is coming.
Tomorrow is coming.

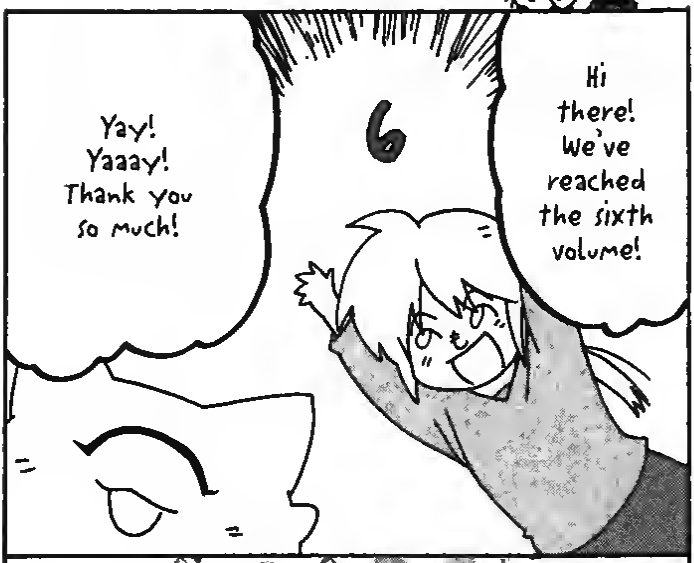
Mei.
I'm scared.


Now, stand and...
ガタ
Sasuke-ku--!
……
Sorry... I was half-asleep ...
I'm an idiot...
……
ｶﾘｶﾘ

Is he still sleeping in the infirmary?
..during class?
Can't you be quiet..
Err...
It was just a dream. Sorry, Sasuke-kun.
I'm so stupid!
Should I go visit him between classes?
Maybe?
キーン
コーン
カー
But what should I say first?
Are you okay? Feeling better?
What about...
...what I said yesterday?

Look, Zenda!
There's a crack here.
You're right.
Let's add it to the map.
Looks like it could collapse any time.
Great find!





Animal Academy

So volumes 1-5 had five chapters each, while volume 6 only has four. It just happened like that.

The chapters have been getting longer!

It's like a sprint.

Drawing the longer chapters is tough, but it's also a lot of fun.

See you next time!

And thanks so much for reading this far!

It's just a little longer, so I hope you can join me for the next volume.

Thank you!

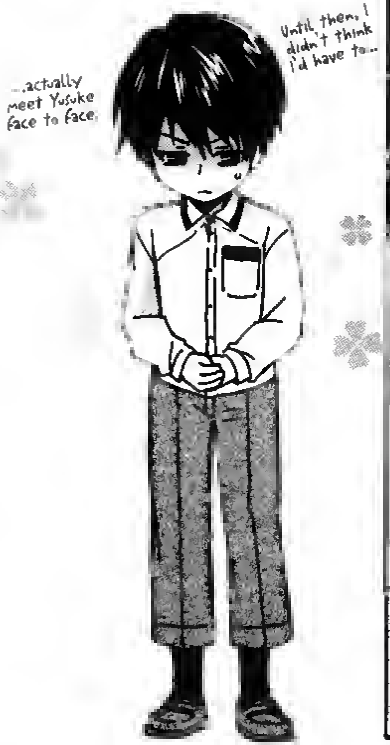
- I. hami
- O. miwa
- K. miwa

and you

How did I end up at Morimori High?
.....
One day when I was really hungry, I met an old lady. She was a magical animal who'd been changing shape for a long time.
So hungry...
She taught me how to transform, plus a lot about humans. She was my master.
I practiced a lot and eventually she told me about the school.
Then I got on the train and met June.
Wow!
I can only picture it as the kind of training you'd see in a manga

I learned about Terue-sans but..

You two were born on the same day, right?
It might be best if you chose the same birthday
.....
Okay
I don't care when it is.
It doesn't matter
You don't have a preference at all?
I think
Well, we started school in the spring...
How about sometime then?
.....
How about autumn?
Summer!
Summer might be good!
Y-yeah?


Until then, I didn't think I'd have to...
...actually meet Yusuke face to face.

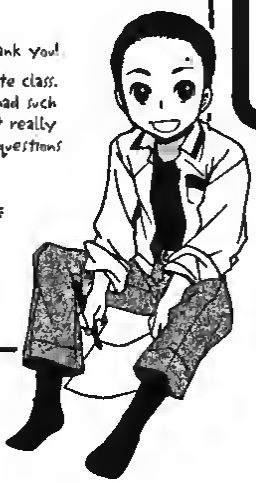
A story I considered doing, #3: Art club member Silvino jealous of Miiko's talents
He got depressed after seeing Suzuhara-san's painting
What's wrong, Silvino?
I've been humiliated and defeated! How dare you mock me?!
Shut up! You stupid animals can't appreciate the artistic genius of that piece!
What? But you're so good at art, Silvino-kun!
Silvino Karamatsu
1st
Miiko Suzuhara
What does he want, then...?
Don't be ridiculous!
1st Place Award
Stinky!
Paint

HAKOBUNE YOKUSHO 0.6

Just before I sat down to write this, I received some fan mail. Thank you!

A lot of you wrote and asked questions about the first-year white class. I was surprised to see that so many of you were interested and had such specific questions. But hey, that's what this page is for! This isn't really important information, but I've tried hard to answer some of your questions.

I have to admit that I came up with a lot of this just now, but I had fun. Hope you like it!



First Year, White Class

Their classroom is located between the red class and blue class.

Name → (Species/Birthday)

Umeka Koyanagi (Fox, 4/5)
Ayaka Mashiyo (Fox, 6/25)
Urara Takaku (Bear, 1/14)
Shizuka Kanematsu (Snake, 3/15)
Reira Eisenji (Raccoon, 1/1)
Makuchi Kimura (Raccoon, 2/28)
Chisato Yanagawa (Raccoon, 4/5)
Rin Tome (Raccoon, 3/13)
Yuichi Takuma (Fox, 8/29)
Toko Kohaku (Cat, 3/2)
Sasuke Sangami (Cat, 8/13)
Rucha Aimi (Cat, 9/4)
Neko Fukuta (Cat, 2/22)
Rawman Kishi (Cat, 8/22)
Mina Tsukuyata (Fox, 8/21)
Kotaro Araki (Fox, 9/9)
Umeka Kazaba (Raccoon, 3/7)
Koyakura Kouketsu (Cat, 8/30)
Harabee Matsukura (Wolf, 3/21)
Uru Morrea (Wolf, 3/20)
Takakuko Nagya (Cat, 4/10)
Miko Sasahara (Cat, 9/9)
Shin Tagoori (Fox, 2/28)
Irakaka Usu (Raccoon, 6/29)

Q. Can you list the characters by height?

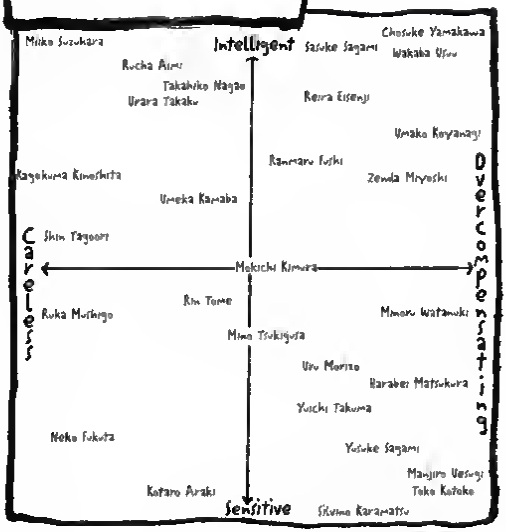
Tallest

Manjiro Uesugi (bomb)
Zenda Miyoshi
Harabei Matsukura
Chosuke Yamakawa
Kotaro Araki
Takahiko Nagao
Sasuke Sagami
Yusuke Sagami
Wakaba Usuu
Uru Morizo
Mokichi Kimura
Ruka Mushigo
Shin Tagoori
Yuichi Takuma
Mino Tsukigusa
Neko Fukuta
Ranmaru Fushi
Reira Eisenji
Umako Koyanagi
Kagekuma Kinoshita
Toko Kotoko
Silvino Karamatsu
Umeka Kamaba
Rucha Aimi
Rin Tome
Urara Takaku
Miiko Suzuhara

Shortest

...something like that?

Q. Who's the smartest?



It breaks down something like that, but of course there are lots of factors that affect their grades.

And so...

Thanks to everyone who sent me letters. I love reading them (and hearing them and seeing them)! Thank you for all the comments and fanart you've sent.

To everyone who's asked things like, "Who does that character in the corner like?" I'll leave that to your imagination. I'm happy to know that you're out there thinking about this stuff. It's more fun for me that way.

That's it for now.

Bye!

In the next volume of...

Neko summoned all of her courage to tell Sasuke that she likes him only to have him collapse! What secrets are Sasuke and Yusuke still hiding? And how are they connected to Neko's very presence at the school? Will Neko ever be able to unravel the mystery of the headmaster, and help her friends overcome their sad pasts?